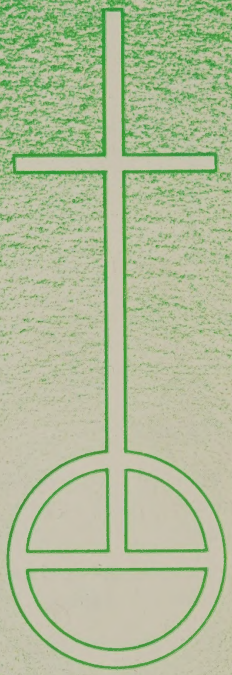
PER
BR
1
.D55
v.1-2

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
FEB 9 2001
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

G-47
D 59824



DIMENSION

MAY 1965

DIMENSION

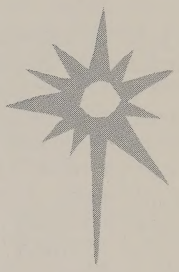
Volume 2 MAY, 1965 Numbe

Editor
CLAYTON CARLSON

Associate Editor
RAY I. LINDQUIST

———

Managing Editor
HOWARD E. FRIEND



CONTENTS

The Dimension of Confessional Theology
A Confession About Confessions
By Kenneth F. Ralph 4

The Churches Confession
By Charles C. West 8

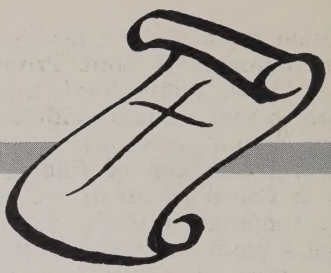
The Dimension of Race Relations
Dare We Dare Selfhood?
By Robert D. Stoddard, Jr. 11

The Dimension of Psychological Insight
Psychological Dimensions of
The Eucharist
By David A. Harmon 15

The Dimension of Christian Worship
A Suggested Rationale for The Ante-
Communion Liturgy
By Jack M. Maxwell 21

The Student's Tale
By William B. Neel
Back Cover

A CONFESSION *About* CONFESSIONS



by Kenneth F. Ralph

It is part of ones seminary education to be bruised or dislocated. The places that hurt differ in each of us according to our temperament and inherited theology. For example, one of my tender spots at the end of three years is in the area of the confessions. I arrived at Princeton Theological Seminary as an elder of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. As such I had cordially indicated my acceptance of the Westminster Confession as that document which 'contained the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scripture.' I came to Princeton with J. B. Green's **Harmony of the Westminster Presbyterian Standards** under my arm.

The bumps and dislocation came in the first year. This paper tells of some of them. It shows how my early love and respect for the Confession as a good statement for the sixties came to be tempered. But it also show signs of confessional recovery. Green still fits under my arm with comfort and pride. But he needs a modern companion. That is why I am looking forward to the Confession now under construction in our Church known as **The Confession of 1967.**

This paper presents four aspects of the confessional task. Remember in all this that we are soon to assume leadership in a confessional Church, that we will be asked to receive and adopt the standards of that Church, and that this same Church is committed to adding a new confession to her creedal library.

I. THE TASK OF A CONFESSION IS TO ANSWER JESUS' QUESTION: "WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?"

The history of the creeds of the first four centuries has a single focus: to enlarge and clarify the most primitive credo of the church, "Thou art the Christ." This was the answer that Simon Peter gave to the question of his Lord. It was the first confession.[1]

It is the suggestion of this paper that the pattern of this first credo is a useful guide to the confessional task. A confession is the answer the Church gives to Christ's continuing question: "Who do you say that I am?" An official creed is the Church's language explaining her belief in Christ. A confession puts in written form the results of her reflection about her Lord.

This does not mean that all a confession does is to speak about Jesus. For any effort to answer his question will entail other questions and answers; and any final statement will deal with them. Confessions about Christ carry with them presuppositions about the Father and implications about the Holy Spirit. But the first question is the important one: "Who do you say that I am?" A good confession stays close to Christ; a bad confession makes him peripheral; a heretical confession does not understand him.

Are we setting up a Christ-fetish in urging Jesus' question as the proper starting point and guide to the confessional task? I hope not. For nothing is more basic to Reformed dogma but that "all theology separated from Christ is not only confused and empty, but mad, deceiving and counterfeit."[2] Theology may have a bad memory about some matters but she loses her life when she forgets that "Christ preposes himself as the object (scopum) to which our faith ought to be directed."[3]. This is why a public

confession explains the Church's present understanding of her Lord. Private faith aims at Christ. Public creeds aim at giving an account of that faith and that Person. So just as we are to read the Bible with the aim of finding Christ there, as Calvin maintains, we ought to read a confession with the intention of finding a good witness to Christ. If this good witness to Christ is absent the creed has failed us.

At this point I should comment that for me one of the attractive notes about the 1967 Confession is its starting point: the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Whereas the Westminster Confession commences with the themes of revelation, Godhead, decree, creation, providence, sin, covenant, this new confession begins with Christ. I repeat: a faith is not Christian if it does not focus on Christ and a confession is not Christian if it does not take us to Him.

II. THE CHURCH MUST MAKE ITS OWN CONFESSION IN EACH NEW AGE.

Schleiermacher taught that dogmatic theology systematized 'the doctrine prevalent in a Christian church at any given time.'[4] The same can be said about a confession. It is the Church's statement about its current understanding of a contemporary Christ; an affirmation of what it here and now believes about him; a current reply to his eternal question; a summary of the prevalent doctrine about Christ.

The creed of a past age cannot serve as the answer of a new age to Christ's question. Past creeds are the answers of past eras. Each new era must make its own reply. Of course the Church may decide that the creed it has inherited from one generation adequately states its own reply to the question. In this case it will refer to this inherited creed as its own answer. Any one creed may serve a number of generations; it can serve but one age. As we will note, a Baroque creed is inappropriate for a Romantic or Twentieth century group of Christians.

There is a sense in which the Church cannot avoid making a confession for its own age. When a church does not write a confession or refer to an inherited confession as adequately stating her own belief the question of whether she really is a church member. For if she is not making her own firm confession she is not being encountered by Christ. To be confronted by Christ is to make some reply. To make no reply, to give no heartfelt affirmation, may be a sign that Christ has left that Church. A time of confessional silence may be a time when God has withdrawn himself. A true church cannot withhold her confession. She must give her reply to his Christic question.

The many and massive confessions of the seventeenth century can no longer suffice. They cannot be our reply. They cannot confess for us. They may form part of our confessional literature; but they cannot be our confession. We have to make our own credos and frame our own replies.

Let me illustrate this by referring to the Westminster Confession. There are four reasons why this confession cannot be our confession of the 1960s. First, we are nervous about many of the replies which Scholastic theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth century provided.

In the second place we ask if a Baroque document can be the proper vehicle for conveying the confession of the church in the twentieth century. 'Baroque' means four things. It is a style in architecture, painting and music. It is a term of esthetic opprobrium—meaning irregularly shaped, grotesque, odd—applied to the Baroque by some of the art critics of the late eighteenth century. Thirdly it is a period of time: roughly 1600-1750. Finally, and this is how it is used here, it is a spirit of an age, a mood, an ethos.

The Baroque was an age which aimed at control. It was saturated with a sense of unlimited power; an age of restless search for authority, order, certainty, structure; a period of Political Absolutism. At its height "architects, sculptors, painters, poets, musicians strove to accomplish the impossible in all directions."

Theology shared this impulse. The period has been described as the 'Period of Confessional Absolutism.' "But you have ordered everything according to measure, number and weight." this line from the Wisdom of Solomon (II:21) was a favorite quotatation in the early seventeenth century. It reflects the certainty of the age and provides a suitable superscription for the imperial structure of the theological encyclopedias of the day.

The Westminster Confession is a document of the Baroque mood. No other kind of document could have been written, or read, in the early seventeenth century. The point for our paper, of course, is that today we are anything but Baroque in spirit; and we have no right to ask our people to try to be Baroque in order to understand the Westminster Confession. A Baroque document cannot be the document to confess our faith. We require a confession that is in harmony with the spirit of our times.

Thirdly, we have to remember that between the seventeenth and the twentieth century lies the Enlightment, and that the Westminster Confession embodies a pre-enlightenment theology.

Finally, note that the Westminster is a legal document. In point of fact it was written as much for constitutional as for confessional purposes. Modern prose runs about twenty words a sentence. This document, like a good deal of seventeenth century writing, uses 60 to 120 words a sentence. The prose of a confession which we wish modern man to read must have a kinship with regular reading material, not with something from a lawyer's files.

All I am saying is this: Bach and Vivaldi may get through from their Baroque setting to an appreciative audience in the twentieth century; but the confessional documents of that age do not. What Schleiermacher said in 1830 is even more true in 1960: the confessions and text books of the seventeenth century can no longer serve their purpose. In large measure they now belong to history. Confessions are 'occasional documents.'

III. EACH NEW CONFESSION MUST ROOT ITSELF IN THE STREAM OF CLASSICAL THEOLOGY

It is a good principle of any discipline not to think lightly of the learning of the past. We can only know where we are or where we may go if we know where we have been. If we put ourselves out of the mainstream of confessional theology it is doubtful that we can achieve noble or creative confessions. None of the Reformers neglected the early creeds of the Church. Instead they embraced them as a permanent part of the Church's confessional life, as enduring information about the Christ. We discredit that Teacher and the past scholarship of the Church if we do not look backward as well as forward in every attempt to write a new confession.

It is worth noting that so allegedly a radical theologian as Schleiermacher insisted that every theological proposition which claims to be Protestant must approve itself "both by appeal to Evangelical confessional documents, or in default of these to the New Testament Scriptures."[5] He protested the 'honor' given him as the head of a new school of theology, insisting that he had 'invented nothing so far as I remember, except my order of topics and here and there a descriptive phrase.'[6] Novelty is no great virtue in theology and good confessional statements attach themselves to the past as well as speak to the present. Thus Barth says he is happy to be dubbed 'orthodox' by his neighbours of the left if this means "to take ones bearings from the fathers, to learn from them and actually accept their imperishable insights."[7]

We should use the documents of the past as important places to visit, while taking care, of course, not to make them our home or conduct our present enquiry from their standpoint. That is why it is ungracious snobbery and ingratitude to treat the Westminster Confession with any form of scorn or low esteem. It is one of the finest English confessions. We have no more noble document in our library of creeds.

To repeat, it is truly Reformed to keep on being Reformed, and it is equally Reformed to keep looking over our shoulder. It is the mark of a good confession that it resists every attempt at novelty, refuses to move outside the mainstream of Christian thought, and acknowledges its debt to every confession that precedes it, particularly the one it is to replace.

IV. A CONFESSION MAY CONTAIN, PERHAPS SHOULD CONTAIN, A SOCIAL ETHIC.

In contrast to the Westminster Confession, the 1967 Confession gives promise of statements on such issues as war, poverty, and race. A new creedal pattern may be emerging, one which spells out the social implications of the Gospel. The issue is: does a specific confession we make about Christ carry with it another confession that relates to contemporary life? For example, does an affirmation of Christ's Lordship imply some direct comment on current domestic or international affairs? Is a confession not only an answer to Christ's question, "Who do you say that I am," but also the Church's answer to the questions of modern life? Stated in one way, how does a method of correlation in theology affect the kinds of statements we make in our confessions about the specific items of the 'situation?' Or stated in another way, does a kerygmatic theology carry in itself some form of social ethic that must be itemized in our official confessions?

CONCLUSION.

Good creeds have a throb to them, you sense the life that created them. You know they are the result of a meeting between Christ and his people. That is why a creed is more than a human reply. Jesus did not congratulate Peter for perceptiveness or an accurate reply. "Thou art the Christ" or any other affirmation—private, corporate, official—is never just an answer to a question. Christ does not admit that interpretation, then or now: "You did not learn that from mortal man; it was revealed to you by my heavenly Father." A confession is also from above. It is the opening of the heavens, the descent of the Spirit, the Word from another: "This is my Beloved; hear ye Him."

1 Cf., H. Sasse, The Confession of Faith, Australian Inter-Varsity Paper, No. 9, Sydney, 1960

2 John Calvin, Commentary of St. John 14:6

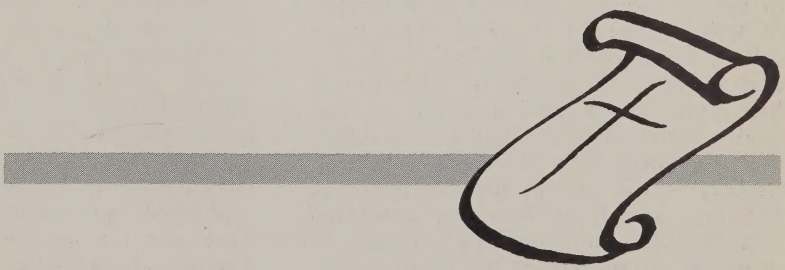
3 John Calvin, quoted by E. A. Dowey, The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology, p. 158

4 Friedrick Schliermacher, The Christian Faith, vol. I., p. 88

5 Ibid., p. 112

6 Ibid., p. xxiv

7 Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, III:4, p. xiii



The Church's Confession

by Charles C. West

How does one confess Jesus Christ in the world today? Mr. Ralph has presented the dynamic of Christian confessing so well that little need be added to it here. He has caught the spirit and motivation of the committee which composed the "Confession of 1967" admirably, and has stated our case with force. The present comment is therefore not a critique. It will rather tell the same story with different emphases.

Confession has traditionally had two occasions. The first, and original one, was the answer given to Christ before the world. It was the response of the believer, with his whole being, to the claim of God on him, for the sake of his neighbors both believing and unbelieving. As such it was an act of proclamation and witness in the form of a response. A second, and more specific occasion arose, however, from the effort of the Church to protect itself against never-ceasing infiltration by the standards of the non-believing world; in other words, against heresy. It became then the definition of the Gospel in face of this danger in order to receive a relation of God which the Church was in danger of losing. Both of these occasions have called for a twofold confession—in act and in word. The life of the Church has given power and meaning to the words with which it defined its faith, and the words have made clear both to heretics within and to the non-believers without, who it is who has authority over this life, and how this authority is exercised. In all of this the Word as historical event, as God in action, has clearly come first. Man, then, has responded with his action and thought, seeking as he lives to distinguish faith from unfaithfulness.

A confession of the Church is therefore first of all an event in the history of its relations with its Lord in the world. It is a response in a given time and place whereby the Church defines itself against the greatest danger which threatens it, rediscovers its Gospel in the midst of a non-believing world's challenge, and gives guidance and inspiration to its life in and for that world. Thus the 4th and 5th century creeds sought to discern and express the action of God and the reality of Christ in the world of Greek philosophy and Byzantine power. The confessions of the Reformation faced a more encyclopedic task—that of redefining the faith of the Church in face of the mutual accommodation of Church and world which was present in medieval Catholicism, and guiding the life of Christian communities which sought to establish their relation to God over against that of the Roman Church. It is in the nature of the case that such a confessional task can never be finished, nor ever perfectly accomplished. So, in modern times, the Church in Germany was once again called to define its faith at Barmen in 1933, this time on a specific point—the exclusive lordship of Jesus Christ over Church and world, and the proper service of the Christian to the state—where both the German-Christian heresy within and the power of Nazism without threatened that Church with destruction and apostasy.

What is the **status confessionis** today? One can, of course, draw instructive analogies between the heresies of former times and the religion we Christians practice today. Sunday school literature is full of pictures of a Christ who is not really human but at the same time lower than God (Arianism). The Reformation

sola gratia, sola scriptura still has not penetrated a Church which is always trying to be justified by works—at very least the works of its clergymen—and is only comfortable with a God who can be defined and proved by human reason or the power of a religious institution. But analogies from history are both subtle and misleading. They may illuminate but they are not authoritative. The biblically revealed Christ confronts the world today with his own authority as he has throughout the history of the Church. It is this confrontation to which "The Confession of 1967" seeks to bear witness.

The central theme of this witness is the work of God in Jesus Christ reconciling the world to himself. This dynamic relation between Christ and the world, and not the natures of Christ, the authority of Scripture, the salvation of the soul, or any of a number of other doctrines, commended itself to ("imposed itself on," the Confession's preamble says) the committee as the **starting point** for the teaching and preaching of the Church in today's world. The Confession does not move from a prior doctrine of God to a Christ who redefines Him, but rather from the work of Christ to the God whom this work presupposes; it is uncompromisingly Christocentric. Nor does it move from a doctrine of the Church to that Church's responsibility in the world but rather from the active power of God's love for the world in Christ, to a Church whose life and being consists in response to that love, and in sharing Christ's ministry to the world. It is uncompromisingly directed, not toward saving individuals out of the world, not toward the other-worldly community, but toward the fulfillment of the whole of human life: social cultural, economic and political, personal and individual u n d e r Christ's rule. It differs from most creeds and confessions throughout the centuries, in short, in being in every line a missionary confession. It is less concerned with purifying the Church than with calling the Church to regroup itself around its functional ministry to a world which is not Christian. Preaching and teaching, praise and prayer, baptism and the Lord's supper, are all understood in the context of this function.

Nothing less would present the Gospel to the world today. But the effort is subject to two dangers of which the committee was peculiarly aware during its work. Let me close my comment by referring to them.

First, how it is possible to confess Christ so that no reader can mistake that he is called to repent for specific instances of unfaithfulness, and yet leave the believer free in the Spirit to act in the complexities of today's society? The Confession not only has a social ethic, it **is** one. There is no prior religious part which then has an application to society, nor is there an individual part which then later leads to community. The **world** is called to repentance, judged, reconciled and given new life in Jesus Christ. This the Confession finds to be the message of Biblical history and the reality of our time and the time to come. But how can this be said so that it will be neither a new religious abstraction on the one hand, nor a new law on the other? It would help if our Pharisees were clearly labelled, if some medieval Vatican were still selling indulgences among us, or if our current Hitlers had some prospect of gaining power. As it is, however, the committee ventured to illustrate the meaning of the Confession as a whole with relation to three conditions—race, war, and poverty,—rather than against some personalized foe. These are the most exposed statements in the whole document. They may be radically changed, and the judgments of the committee about them may be corrected. But the validity of the entire Confession depends on whether in its final form they are sharpened and retained as the specific repentance of the Church for its unfaithfulness in our time, and its specific confession of the power of Christ to save.

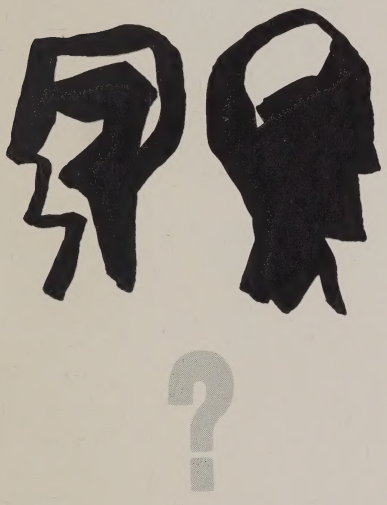
Second, how it is possible for an unfaithful Church to confess faithfully? The words of this Confession come largely out of the Biblical-theological renewal of the past generation. Barth and Bon-

hoffer are as influential in it as Luther and Calvin. But these brave words have been used by a church which has accommodated even them to its timid, self-interested conformity. Meanwhile the world becomes ever more estranged from any conceivable pattern of theological understanding. Is it too late for a Confession such as this to be missionary? Is the Church condemned to silence until it can find a way of life which will make its words credible once more?

There is, I believe, an answer to this which does not dull the edge of the Confession's justified attack. It is God, not man, who judges the unfaithfulness of the Church. The failure of our message to communicate is a problem of our failure to hear and accept it first of all. We have become the unbelieving world—a religious, church-organized world, but unbelieving nevertheless—which as such needs to discover the judging and saving Gospel addressed to it in terms which ring with unmistakable historical power. In other words we have in God's revealed dealings with men a reality to discover which is valid for all unbelievers, religious and secularized alike. The faithfulness of the Church is the key to its mission in the world. The Confession of 1967 is an effort to discover the form of this faithfulness.

JAMES BALDWIN:

Dare We Dare Selfhood



by Robert D. Stoddard, Jr.

James Baldwin is one of the most compelling and sensitive writers of our times. In his novels, short stories and essays, he does more than portray life within the city ghetto; he opens up the inner workings of the Negro's mind, laying bare his private thoughts and emotions.

At the same time, Baldwin's white readers encounter themselves at the intense depths of their being. Whites are portrayed **as they are:** agents of dehumanization, creating t h e i r "heaven" and "the black man's hell."

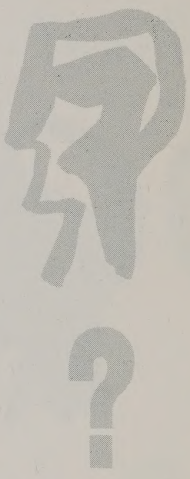
Christianity, as Baldwin sees it, is closely identified with this dehumanizing process. The first Christians the Negro came into contact with were those who believed that "he was a descendent of Ham who had been cursed and . . . predestined to be a slave." From that time on the Negro has been the victim of the prohibitions, crimes, and hypocrisies of the white Church, the God of which became the "White God" who was closely identified with the same whites who separated the "Negro from the sun, love, life and power."

The Negro, on the other hand, has had no desire to join the white church for he has come to realize "he who debases others debases himself." Thus, the Negro chooses not to live by such standards, "Christian" or not. "If God cannot make us larger, freer and more loving, then it is time we got rid of Him."

The asceticism of the white church has done much to segregate congregations; Balwin symbolically portrays this in **Another Country.** He describes a French town in which a cathedral towered over the town, the plains and the lives, seemingly demanding and receiving a "perpetual, living sacrifice." Such strict **denial of the self** goes against the grain of the Negro heart and soul, because to him "to be sensual is to respect and rejoice in the force of life . . . and to be **present** in all that one does, from the effort of loving to the breaking of bread."

James Baldwin pities the white who has become accustomed to brutality and indifference and terrified of human affection. He loses "his touchstone for reality, for this touchstone can only be oneself."

Although the Negro has not been included in the white church, some elements of white Christianity have rubbed off on him and become fused with his sensual self; hence, the Negro church. In Baldwin's essay "Down at the Cross," he relates how fear and a desire to belong drove him into a Harlem store-front church, and eventually into "the ministry." As a teen-ager he had a conversion experience described in **Go Tell It On The Mountain,** a book largely autobiographical. He discovered "if one despairs of human love, God's love alone is left." Included in his spiritual experience was a bargain with Jesus never to let him know the secrets of his own heart. But Jesus failed to keep the bargain, and, through Baldwin's contacts with Jews, his reading of Dostoyevsky and his seeing pictures in the newspapers of white Italian priests blessing white Italian troops on their way to Ethiopia, he discovered the faith.



Baldwin also became disillusioned with the Negro church which made God black and limited love to blacks. If only Negroes gained the crown, then heaven was **another ghetto.** In order not to dehumanize the white man, Baldwin rejected salvation.

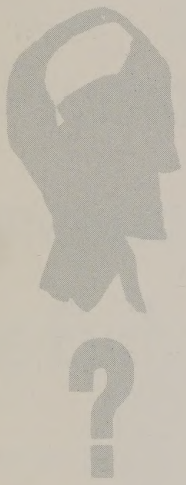
The young minister also came to reject the Negro brand of asceticism, of negativism—of **self-dehumanization.** Too much was based on repudiation of the world, and on trust and endurance in the inescapable God. Thus, the Negro church, as the white's, was ruled by "Blindness, Loneliness and Terror, the first . . . necessary . . . in order to deny the other two . . . People ought to love the Lord because they loved Him, not because they were afraid of going to Hell."

Despite his conclusions, young Baldwin hesitated to leave "religion" for it had become the "gimmick" that lifted him out of his state of non-being. Yet, tears, repentance and rejoicing changed nothing!

The masquerade lasted three years; then Baldwin forsook dehumanizing "Christianity" to become a writer. He sets out to record reality and convey the truth that is a prerequisite for freedom and humanization, should they ever evolve in the world.

Reality, to Baldwin, is governed by the constants of life: struggle, death—and love. Life is basically tragic because "we will sacrifice all the beauty of our lives . . . in order to deny the

fact of death . . . the only fact we have. It seems to me that one ought to rejoice in the **fact** of death . . . indeed, earn one's death by confronting with passion the conundrum of life." Responsibility to life "is the small beacon in that terrifying darkness" which we "must negotiate as nobly as possible for the sake of those . . . after us." (**The Fire Next Time**)



The characters Baldwin creates in his novels take their turns at trying to unravel the puzzle of life and selfhood, each succeeding and failing to certain degrees. He reveals through them conclusions about the most mysterious of reality's constants—love. Love, being a relationship, needs two components; each needs love to fulfill his selfhood and capacity for giving and receiving love. He demands **freedom to love,** a breaking down of the dehumanizing barriers that prevent people from loving each other.

His characters, at great risk and cost to themselves, forsake all standards except those they set in their struggles to discover selfhood within a true love relationship. They move among themselves attempting to find the partner who, regardless of race, sex, age, religion, social status or nationality, will best fulfill his or her need to give and to receive love.

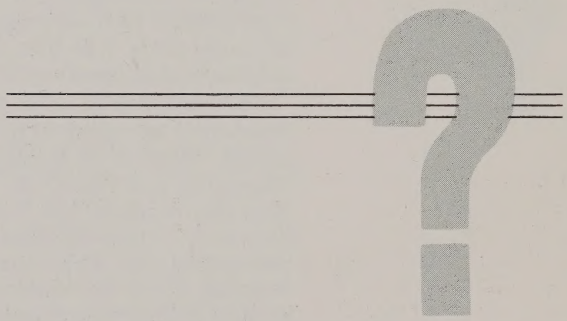
Although few of us could forsake all objective standards, we must agree that **love is the essential element in humanization.** In his essay "Down at the Cross" in **The Fire Next Time,** Baldwin reminds his Negro brothers of their history and the insights it has provided them concerning the white man's nature and needs. Negroes know the whites like a mother knows a child. The Negro openly goes to the white for material needs, while the white, under the cover of night, goes to the Negro for love. Baldwin encourages the Negro to accept the whites with love, for "these innocent people have no other hope." In being loved, perhaps the white man will discover **his selfhood,** and being free, will free the Negro.

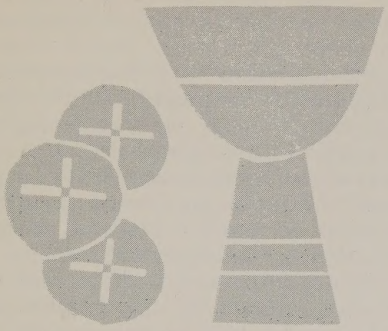
James Baldwin encourages the white man to come to the Negro in the light of day, realizing safety, money and power are not constants in the mix of life, struggle, death and love. Commitment and action involve danger. Love involves risk. But only "with great effort and sweat and risk . . . (can we) make the world more human."

"We are capable of bearing a great burden,

once we discover that the burden is reality and arrive where reality is . . . if we could accept ourselves as we are, we might bring new life to western achievements and transform them." Baldwin believes that in order to achieve all this nationally, we must first achieve it on a one-to-one basis.

In concluding "Down at the Cross," Baldwin sets forth two alternatives and their consequences. If the aware Negro and the aware white, "handful that we are," create and insist upon the consciousness of the other, a historical change might occur. "If we do not now dare everything, the fulfillment of that prophecy, recreated from the Bible in song by a slave, is upon us, 'God gave Noah the rainbow sign. No more water, the fire next time.' "





The Psychological Dimensions of the Eucharist

by David A. Harmon

The word "dimension" stems from a Latin root, meaning measurement. It refers to the measurable aspects of an area or subject. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to determine specific proportions within the motif of thankfulness. Appreciation, an emotional structure, is an intangible affect and not a mathematical quantity measurable by a slide rule. Thus, findings are not to be expected in a precise numerical way. Foundations are sought that are valid according to definite psychological.

"Perspective" in this paper will be used in the sense of an optical instrument. Continuing the optical metaphor, the basic "telescope" for the paper will be the psychological system, especially according to Rapaport's pattern of classification. Concepts from Rapaport's categories will be used as the particular "lenses."

Three main categories were especially useful to the study. They were the dynamic, the structural, and the economic theories of personality. Viewed synoptically, we believe these concepts provide an effective model for understanding the Lord's Supper from the perspective of psychology.

The Instinctual Model

Freud asserted that the structure of the human personality was comprised of a triune system of id, ego, and superego. Within these "building blocks" of the human psyche, (primarily in the id area), Freud postulated the location of powerful regulators of human conduct called instincts. The basic pattern of these regulators of human behavior is to reduce tension produced by disturbing clashes within the triune psychical system.

Specific insights from this model having relevance to the Eucharist are the related concepts of object-cathexis and a cluster of defense-mechanisms. Object-cathexis, or object-choice, means psychic energy is invested into an action or an image which will satisfy an instinct or resolve tension.

My premise is that such energy is invested into the activities and imagery of the Eucharist to satisfy deep, basic needs. It meets desires for: (1) a sense of security, (2) a feeling of fellowship, (3) a sense of recognition, dependence, acceptance and a network of related emotions. These are involved from infancy with the physical act of eating and the psychological factor of being fed.

Defense Mechanisms

In the process of object-cathexis the id releases amounts of its energy away from irrational interests into the ego where it is used in more rational concerns. This method is known in psychological contexts as identification. Applied metaphorically to the Lord's Supper it means that instead of "Mr. Id wasting his time in the septic tanks" of the un-

conscious, it identifies with "Mr. Ego" who takes his energy and puts it to good, wholesome use. In other words, the id reduces tension from unsociable drives by placing them into more acceptable areas, such as, the beliefs and activities of Holy Communion.

Thus, a "religious" cannibal could come to the Communion table and in a very socially acceptable way use his ego to "rationalize" that his only enjoyment was derived from "spiritually" eating the god. The point is that many aspects of the Lord's Supper, (such as the symbolic eating of Christ's body) are based on deeper often destructive instincts.

A second psychological process used in the Eucharist is known as repression. Unsociable, embarrassing desires are held down, or repressed, out of mental sight and awareness. Man's primitive desire in savage cultures to eat the god (or father-figure) of the tribe in order to gain his sexual power, is unacceptable to modern man. So, in Communion when we gather around the table, we "repress" our anthropological residual relatedness to our primitive forebears. It is too barbaric and loathsome to be expressed openly. Yet, it is a real stratum of our psychic life that should be faced for mental health and integrity.

Projection is used in the Lord's Supper. A deep source of anxiety is attributed to someone else rather than to ourselves. I maintain that projection is involved in the controversy over the real presence of Christ in Communion. We are anxious because we have crucified Christ, and we know deep within our conscious that he is no longer with us in the pre-Calvary body.

He is with us now, in the universal, Holy Spirit sense. Yet, such an understanding makes us uneasy because the idea of "the Holy Spirit" as the center of Communion appears too nebulous and difficult to grasp in practical human terms. We would rather have a body that we can handle in human contexts. Rather than face the painful truth of his presence as Holy Spirit, we "project" our troubles on Jesus, and try to make him say wierd implications to support our transubstantiation and consubstantiation formulas.

Symbolization is a defense technique that may be employed to hide negative emotions. It may see threatening things as signs of pleasant realities. Rather than accept the harsh truth of the actual absence of Jesus' pre-Calvary body at Eucharist, we "see" all kinds of positive indications of his concrete presence there.

The past pattern in the cluster of defensive formations, that I assert is (unconsciously) used in Communion is the infantile-role identification. This structure enables people temporarily to escape the rigorous demands of maturity by assuming the role of children. Imperceptibly, we assume the role of children gathered around the Warm, protective, "womb-like" table of our heavenly (mother and) father. All our present cares are suspended and released (for that period) from our weary shoulders and minds. We rest. We relax in the strong arms of God our Father.

This like all the other defensive systems is not at all bad. "Like holiday celebrations, it enables our taxed psyche to get a much needed breather, to experience a refreshing sense of novelty, and to receive psychological nourishment for the hard return to the battle of daily existence."[1] The point in discussing the instinctual model and network of defense methods is that they enable people to meet disturbing psychological needs. My point is twofold. Because the Lord's Supper reduces anxiety, people consciously and unconsciously appreciate it. And from these perspectives the insight emerges that the Lord's Supper can be used as masquerade for negative feelings and instincts. Knowledge of this could enable a person concerned about the best use of the Eucharist to be aware of the serious possibilities of negative emotions, beyond the surface, in order to provide the individuals with healing ventilation in other settings.

The Genetic-Adaptive Paradigm

Hall and Lindzey's analyses provide

another significant model for examining the Lord's Supper. Taken together, the genetic and adaptive categories give helpful insights into aspects of the Holy Communion.

Man is both an interpersonal and intrapersonal animal, a product of interacting biological, cultural, psychological, and theological structures. From the earliest stages of life the organism is pliable, especially to biological and psychological conditioning. From his earliest periods of life the organism is molded, especially by psychosexual forces according to societal demands.

According to the genetic viewpoint, man's instinctual energies are channeled through specific phases or libidinal levels. This training is geared basically around two poles, parents and society. It develops thoughout infancy (perhaps in the pre-natal period) into adulthood. The libidinal areas become the primary physical and mental framework of mankind, according to this theory. Because there is such a complete blending of feeling-tones into biological growth our deepest emotional patterns become vitally related with our developing anatomy.

Because the libidinal and affective modalities are so indelibly interwined, an examination of libidinal areas can reveal clues into emotional traits at given stages and vice versa. My major premise is that the "rock bed" level of appreciation regarding the Holy Meal is entrenched firmly within the libidinal aspects of the oral, anal, and genital areas. By viewing these libidinal "lenses" within the Eucharist, these genetic-adaptive structures may provide "peep-holes" into the basic emotional dimensions within the Lord's Supper.

Webster's Dictionary defines "libido" as a psychoanalytical term meaning all of the instinctual energies and desires which are derived from the Id. It is the innate actuating or impelling force in living beings: the vital impulse or urge.

According to Freud and Abraham, "The stages of (libidinal) development are as follows: (1) the dependent, or oral, stage of development which is usually associated with feeding."

One of the key areas in this area is the mouth, due to the pleasure associated with this erogenous zone through physical contact. There are oral implications within the Eucharist. Even the abbreviated eating acts as "trigger mechanisms" recalling memories (generally happy) associated with real eating.

According to Melanie Klein's theory, the child begins his growth into thankfulness according to the way he is fed. The breast becomes the essential source of the neonate's food and from this vital, enjoyable physical contact is developed the basis of envy or gratitude. If he is handled too harshly, he may become envious of the distraction to his comfort and bite the nipple as an indication of his displeasure. It is thus in simple outline according to M. Klein that the dual bloom of envy and gratitude takes root within the soil of the human mind.

"The very helplessness of the infant makes the elementary experience of food-getting a distinctively social experience. Here, at the threshold of life, dependency is etched into the human nature never to be erased."[2] Here in the fluid "clay" of the emotional structure involving the act of feeding and eating, a network of gratifying associations are stamped indelibly into the human fabric. It is in his "rock bed" strata that I maintain the vital aspect of thanksgiving attendant to the (symbolic) eating of the Eucharist is built.

From an etymological analysis there may be a clue indicating the word "gratitude's" early relationship with eating. One form of the prefix "grate" has a cluster of meanings centered around "things that reduce to small particles by rubbing against a sharp surface." This could be an early root for grinding or chewing food. From this act of "reducing (food) into small particles by rubbing against (the teeth) a sharp surface," feelings of appreciation from this activity may have developed to eventually signify anything enjoyable to the physical or mental structures of the body.

My point is that there may be an

implicit etymological justification and correlation of "grating food with gratitude." In this context, gratitude is seen as a positive affect based primarily on the mental satisfactions derived from the physical necessity of food. My premise is that this mental carry-over operates within the Eucharist as a deep dimension of gratitude.

According to Freudians "the genital, or oepipal, stage of development . . . is characterized by activated needs for competition with the parent of the opposite sex."[3]

The symbolism of God "the Father," Christ "the Son" and Communion as a "family" fellowship has clear oepipal connotations. Our feelings about being gathered within the family fold of a heavenly father, son, and family are based directly on our association with a real earthly father, mother, and siblings. This relationship with our human parents may not be based on actual pleasant experiences. However, within the Communion event the feelings are idealized, and the negative realities of earthly family are forgotten or repressed. Because these idealized emotions of family joy can be significantly expressed within Communion, many people naturally like the Eucharist because of its "warmth" and family fellowship."

Another stage of libidinal growth is the latency period, which is marked by "intense . . . closeness to the same sex, and development of gangs." The Eucharist provides us the context for "closeness to the same sex" in a socially acceptable activity. The subtle encouragement of "development of (gangs) cliques" by the Eucharist is a reality that has plagued the Church since its inception down to this very day. It is undeniable that the Lord's Supper meets the basic needs of the latency period.

As Oates says, "The puberty, or genital maturity, . . . is characterized by the development of the reproductive capacities at the biological level and the choice of a person of the opposite sex at the psychological level." The Lord's Supper encourages wholesome heterosexual participation and provides a positive setting for biological contact. Humans, especially those in the genital stage like any activity that brings them together into a meaningful heterosexual relationship. They "enjoy" the taking of Communion together. Plus, it has an additional bonus, it has "religious" significance.

In summary, within the Freudian perspective of libidinal associations to emotions, it becomes feasible that a basic area of appreciation within communion is grounded in generally pleasant affects unconsciously apart from the event.

And yet, the question that rises to haunt this assertion is also grounded in the libido's relationships to Holy Communion. Libidinal stages take negative as well as positive expression. What about the negative? Don't they challenge my premise that libidinal stages are normative to the positive affect of gratitude within the Eucharist?

It is true that there are negative aspects as well as positive facets of libidinal development. However, these do not alter my main assertion. The negative phases testify to the factor of ingratitude within the Eucharist which is the other side of my premise for the factors of gratitude.

Let me indicate what is meant by this statement. The fact that biting and chewing are involved within the oral stage means that eating may be a context for hostile expressions as well as positive ones. It often is both. A family meal may be the mental battleground where conflictual feelings are released via cracking and chewing the food. There may be both bickering and happiness at supper. Negative expressions from libidinal areas does not negate my premise of positive affects emerging from libidinal stages; it shows its balance and depth.

There are definite implications from this realization. Study of negative emotional feelings regarding the Eucharist, such as the encouragement of selfish exclusiveness, and matching them to definite bad libidinal expressions, such as selfish (oral, anal, genital) exclusiveness may reveal some fascinating insights into causes of division within the Lord's Supper.

A hint of anti-genitality may be seen in another area of Holy Communion. It may be seen in the unrealistic emphasis on father's role to the utter evasion of mother's essential participation in the family affair. What is any supper, however sacred, without mother? Even though the priest or the minister in gown seeks to unconsciously symbolize both mother and father, mother is still consciously and officially left out of the service, in which she realistically seems so cardinal. If she does have a role, it is a subservient, minor part. Could the Lord's Supper be reflecting the males defensive, immature "getting back at" the medling of mother-women in general? This could be regarded as ingratitude to women in an extremely vital setting.

I have given two examples of what I consider negative expressions within Communion to illustrate the exciting possibilities that could emerge from matching negative libidinal expressions to realities of the present day and historical operations of the blessed event. The basic point is that the libido's anal, oral and genital stages provide valid psychological dimensions for understanding the factors of gratitude and ingratitude within the Eucharist.

The Adaptive Concept

The categories of the psychoanalytical system so far have stressed insights into the individual. However, there is also merit in seeing Holy Communion as a "group" situation. From its birth within the Upper Room to its present day celebration in cathedral, store front church, and hospital chapel, it is still the main social event within the entire Christian faith. Because it has met and continues to meet real social concerns, people like it very much and are grateful for it.

Employing Lewin's perceptual field as a pattern, Holy Communion may be seen as a meaningful whole, composed of figure and background. The minister is the figure. He is vital to the entire group because he guides the intra-dynamics of the group with orderly, specific measures into its greatest degree of fulfillment.

There is a profound relationship between both the minister and people at the act of Communion that is best conceptualized by the figure-ground model. The relationship is transactive, it has a strong, definite, distinct feedback from people to figure and back. It is representative, the minister stands for Christ, and yet the feeling of identification with Christ is heightened by the "flesh and bone" reality of the minister or priest. Thus, the figure is bi-dimensional, he represents an aspect of Christ's presence Himself. On the other hand, he is the reality of humanity (or the group itself) standing before Christ, bereft and broken, yet loved and forgiven.

Yet, there is a third dimension to the figure of the sacrament. He is neither God alone, nor man alone, but the incarnate figure of the God-Man. Each aspect is involved or enacted out by the minister. Each phase is powerful by itself. In the words and acts, all three merge into one, as a kind of animated cartoon. My point is that the group appreciates the figure because he enacts in a smooth, fluid drama the three essential assertions of the Christian faith: Father, son and man. Most of its awesome, impact is felt at the visual, auditory, non-verbal level. Because this powerful drama is "so to speak" played so simply and concisely, it strikes our minds with a thundering impress.

A sense of power accrues to the people in identifying with the "Lord's Power" as they commune around "His" table. The double blessing of such appropriation is that it can be taken and used without a resulting sense of guilt because it came from a "good" source, the Lord himself.

Any group needs a leader who is constantly there and not just present on special occasions. Therefore, the minister acting as a substitute for Christ meets the basic need of a group, namely a capable leader visually there. "A community inveterately develops some kind of leadership. The religious dimension of personality is closely associated with man's need for leadership."[4]

Biosocial Viewpoints

Clues into the nature of the Lord's Supper as a group situation are provided by using several categories of the biosocial concepts from Adler, Sullivan and Fromm.

According to Adler, the creative self, the will to power, the great upward drive, social concern, uniqueness, inferiority feelings and compensation, and style of life are the major drives of individuals and groups. Jesus Christ and his disciples gathered around the table exemplified individually and collectively: the great upward drive, the will to power, the creative self, uniqueness, social concern, inferiority feelings, compensation and style of life. Because the Eucharist started out as a replica of real life, in concrete flesh and blood terms, it still is deeply grounded in intrapersonal and interpersonal realities. Most of the vital categories of personal and corporate social concerns are dramatically pointed up and nourished within the scope of the Lord's Supper.

Since it has such universal application and social versatility to people's existential needs, it is sincerely appreciated by them. Because it has met such crucial concerns through the centuries, a mystical kind of sacred aura "of historical respect pervades around it, and when it is plunged into the existential concerns of people today, it becomes a powerful circuit of "live" appreciation.

Viewed within H. S. Sullivan's context of interpersonal orientation, the interpersonal factor is the greatest aspect of human personality. "The individual does not and cannot exist apart from his relations with other people. What is distinctly human is the product of social interactions."

The Eucharist is the greatest "interpersonal event" of the Christian faith. Yet it is the most personal, because its center is a Person.

From start to finish the Lord's Supper is a dynamic cross-weave between person and group. The results are an extremely realistic pattern of life. People throughout the ages have felt this reality, and people today witness to its integral balance between group and individual.

Fromm lists five basic needs of any group. They are the need for: (1) relatedness, (2) transcendence, (3) rootedness, (4) identity, and (5) orientation.[2]

Relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, identity, and orientation, are inherent within the matrix of the Holy Communion. We must become mid-wives who give them a healthy birth into our society.

The Lord's Supper is especially strong in implications for Fromm's first four needs. It is exceedingly weak in the fifth. The Lord's Communion should re-discover a unified, positive system of orientation without distoring the reality of the Lord's presence or without falling into crass explanations of his real presence. It needs to orientate itself in regard to (1) real presence, (2) reasons for unity, (3) practical actual unity, before it can effectively guide the lives of others.

According to Erich Fromm, "Never before has man come so close to the fulfillment of his most cherished hopes as today. Our scientific discoveries and technical achievements enable us to visualize the day when the table will be set for all who want to eat, a day when the human race will form a unified community and no longer live as separate entities."

The Church's muscles should be working harder on this dream.

[1] A paraphrase from Professor Hiltner's lecture on "Psychological and Theological Dimensions of Christian Celebrations," December 14. 1964

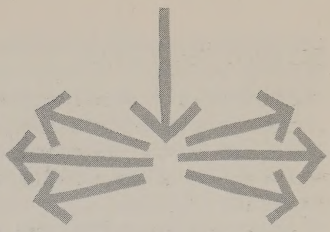
[2] Wayne Oates, *Religious Dimensions of Personality*, p. 90

[3] Ibid., p. 156

[4] Ibid., p. 124

[5] Seward Hiltner, *Preface to Pastoral Theology*, p. 214-15

A SUGGESTED RATIONALE FOR THE ANTE-COMMUNION LITURGY



by Jack M. Maxwell

Throughout her history the Church of Jesus Christ has experienced herself in various ways at the point of her worship life. Many and varied have been the orders of worship and the several rationales; however, central to any order of worship must be some dynamic around which the whole is constructed.

Two basic movements characterize the Church—a coming-in and a going-out; a gatheredness and a scatteredness. Central to these movements has been the realization that worship without witness is an emasculated activity having little if any relevance to this life; and that witness without worship is merely worldly busyness—temporal tinkerings. For whatever reason the Christian has historically known this one imperative: to meet with the brethren for worship. His "need" or "desire" for worship is hardly the explanation for his activity. If it were, worship would know no regularity, for moods and needs change. The fact is that the Church did not institute worship as such. Certainly the various liturgies and rituals have come out of the Church's experience with worship, but this continual gathering appears to be inherent in the very nature of the Church as the Body of Christ.

But, why worship? Why is this coming together inherent in the Church's nature. If any satisfactory answer to this question can be made, we will have the dynamic of worship around which our order of service is constructed. The answer is surely this: once one knows himself as created and sustained and loved by the God he meets in Jesus Christ, he finds no other alternative than worship, than praise, than obedience. He comes together with others who name the Name of Christ for the sake of going out with them into the world, yet this going out is but the natural by-product of his praise. Obedience in the world is the only issue of worship.

If we can assume this to be our task and purpose, the next question may be: How can worship be designed to facilitate such a purpose? At the outset it must be admitted that there is not one, holy and irrefutable order of worship. Let's face it—difficult as it may be for some of us—the **Kyrie** can be effectively used at more than one place in the Liturgy. Nevertheless, once a given rationale is proposed, then the various liturgical "elements" do tend to make more sense at one point than at another. One such rationale is that of revelation and response. God speaks and acts in worship. His communication with us is plainly not confined to 11 A.M. Sunday; however, that the Church has perpetually found in worship its **raison d'etre** should serve as a warning to those in our day who are so quick to depreciate this corporate act. The fact that God chooses to speak and act in spite of some of our mangled orders does not mean that we are less than irresponsible in tolerating them.

Revelation and response presumes that God takes the initiative—that he speaks first to us. As well, it presumes that our obligation is to answer that revelation. The revelation takes several forms and so does the response, as the following order of service will illustrate.

Prologue

The Prologue to the service contains, first, the Call to Worship. Hopefully such a Call will be scriptural and unembellished, for it serves notice to the gathered people that they are about to engage in

the work of worshipping God. Here the identity of God's chosen people is re-established and their purpose set forth.

Following the Call to Worship should come the Hymn of Adoration or Praise. If there is a single, dominant note to be struck in worship, it is surely the note of praise, and straightaway the objective character is established. During the singing the choir normally processes into the chancel. We are coming to realize that in the strictest celebration of Reformed worship, the choir should be heard and not seen; however, until that time arrives when every sanctuary is equipped with a balcony for the choir, some symbolism can be derived from the processional—the gathered congregation proceeding into the place of God.

Standing for the Hymn, the congregation remains standing for the Prayer of Adoration. This prayer should be of a strong Trinitarian nature and thus answers the question: Who is this God we have come to worship? What is he like? It serves much as a mirror. As we look at the holiness of God, we cannot but see the reflection of our own unholiness. The logical response is therefore, "Woe is me!"

Act I Service of Confession

At this point the service moves into the first "Act"—that of Confession. For the corporate prayer of confession, printed either in the bulletin or read from the **Book of Common Worship,** the congregation is seated or kneeling (and preferably the latter). That the note of objectivity be maintained, such a prayer must be corporate and general. This is not the time for individual subjectivity; rather an activity of the gathered congregation confessing its rejection of God's mercy and imploring God's forgiveness.

The response of God is the Assurance of Pardon. Again it is preferable that such a Pardon be scriptural and unembellished, declaring the Good News that in Jesus Christ one finds wholeness and meaning and love and forgiveness.

When one comes into a sanctuary and hears the definition of what he is about to do: "Let us worship God"; joins in the singing of God's praise; hears of God's holiness; confesses his own unworthiness; receives God's absolution—then nothing is logical except to stand in a burst of praise. One of the metrical Psalms is ideal for this response. The Gloria can be used, or, as is the case more often, the reading of the Psalter. This concludes and completes the first Act.

Act II Service of the Word

In this act God's revelation comes through the reading of the Lessons and the preaching of the Word. Man's response is made through hymn and creed. Beginning with the Old Testament Lesson, which establishes the context for the coming of the Christ, the Liturgy proceeds with the Gloria Patri (or some other suitable response if the Gloria has been used above). Next the New Testament Lesson, which is followed by a hymn. This hymn is chosen both as a response to the Lesson just read and as a preparation for the sermon to follow. Lessons and sermon should be kept in close proximity within the Liturgy to remind the preacher, if no one else, that the one comes out of and witnesses to the other. The congregation responds to the contemporary revelation of God received in the sermon by standing to recite one of the historic creeds of the Church. The God we know in history and the God we know through the Church is the God we worship and obey.

Act III Service of Dedication

The Ante-Communion Liturgy builds to its climax in this Act, for here the Church becomes the intercessor for the world, and here the congregation offers itself in oblation to God. Through the prayers of thanksgiving, supplication and intercession the Church acknowledges her utter dependence upon God and her utter concern for the world. Characteristically these prayers are summed up in the Lord's Prayer.

Following the prayers is the act of rededication and self-oblation—the offering. This is not a collection and the accumulation of money is not the primary

purpose. In fact it sometimes seems that money given for the physical and financial work of the local Church should be mailed to the Church office and left out of the service entirely until we recover the understanding that these coins represent first the offering of ourselves to God in response to his prior gift to us in Christ.

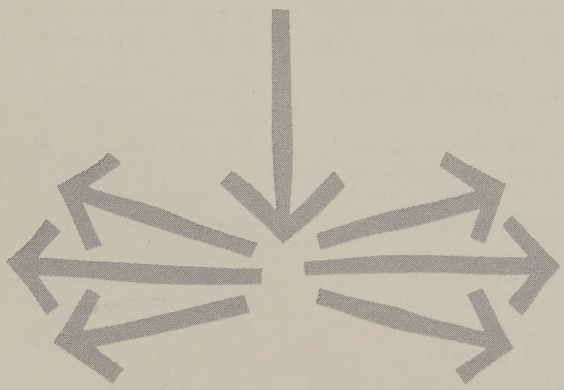
This is the point at which the Anthem most logically should appear. Its purpose is not to cover up any noise the ushers may make; rather to lend to the act of offering its proper note of praise and dedication. It is quite possible to schedule the Anthem earlier in the service—perhaps following the Old Testament Lesson—however, it tends more toward a performance when placed there than in the later time of corporate offering.

Following the Doxology and the Prayer of Dedication—neither of which should be omitted—comes the concluding Hymn. By its words and rhythm this hymn should prepare the congregation to reenter the world with the conviction of purpose and clarity of vision which can come from right worship alone. The Benediction concludes the service—a conclusion which is not a prayer; rather a charge received with raised head and determined understanding, for now we stand as forgiven people, people called of God to be mission in the world.

Each of these "Acts" has a characteristic awareness, mood, and Actor. In Act I the awareness is knowledge of the self and of the corporate people. The mood is penitence and pardon, Christian sorrow. The action is that of the mercy of God the Son. In Act II the awareness is of obedience to God; the mood is praise and witness, Christian joy; the action is that of the glory of God the Father. In Act III the awareness is a responsibility for society; the mood is dedication and offering, Christian compassion; the action is that of life in God the Spirit.

The coming-in, then, for the sake of the going-out, in which we go in the knowledge and realization that we are a forgiven and accepted people with a mission to perform and a task to employ.

Rise, take up thy bed, and WALK!



THE STUDENTS TALE

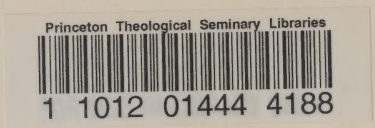
by William B. Neel

When the soft September winds began
To comb the grass with gentle strokes
And winter had not laid his hands upon
The ground, there came to Princeton,
students wont
To seek religious knowledge. One
of these,
A quiet man, with deep brown hair
and quick
Intense, perceiving eyes did come to read
The Holy Writ. Others came, and thus
Began the year of study; some to work
In this way, some in that and all became
As reapers in the field, making scythe
And step agree in rhythm of their work.
But this one man, from youth a
thoughtful boy,
Was not content with rustling sheaves,
but went
Inside himself to see the pathways of
His mind, in order that his mind
and work
Agree. For he was troubled; though
he bore
His load, his heart was far away.
He went
Among the thickets, breaks and
patches with
An eye unturned by awesome sights.
He flinched
Not when, over the precipitous
brink of mind,
He saw the rolling seething chaos of
The inmost personality. To Hell
Did Dante go; so went this man, yet not
Without his Virgils did he go, for each
New thought became his guide to
show a new
And awesome deeper circle to our hero.
Yet, unlike brave Dante, he has gone
A way by which he may not yet return;
Confused by many guides, he
needs one sure
To point the way to Paradiso. He
Will suffer his own Purgatorio on
His way, but he will one day come to find
The truth of life for which he seeks;
sped on
And comforted by prayers from
those who now,
In humble immitation, seek to be
As he was, pilgrim of the mind.

7193 TA 46
02-08-01 32180 XL

FOR USE IN LIBRARY ONLY

PERIODICALS



FOR USE IN LIBRARY ONLY

PERIODICALS

FOR USE IN LIBRARY ONLY.